

Horseback Riding Essentials You Need



As a part of the Wild Wild West, Utah is big on horseback riding.

However, as popular as the sport can be, it also can seem a bit intimidating starting out. Novice riders in Utah often find themselves overwhelmed with information and items they may need to purchase.

In this post, the essentials you need will be covered to help alleviate any stress and help you to get one step closer to achieving your Utah horseback riding dreams!

Overview of Horseback Riding Essentials:

- Safety Gear for Riders
- Clothing Items
- Necessary Horseback Riding Gear (For the Horse)

What Type of Safety Gear Do I Need?

Even though beginners [ride](#) horses that are usually pretty well-trained, safety gear is still important and necessary. Whether you're on a trail ride or in a simple pasture, here are a few things you'll need:

1. Helmet

No matter your experience level, a horse riding helmet should be mandatory. Horseback riding can be dangerous and could result in head trauma. Horses are large animals that have their own minds. We can't predict what they will do and don't know if we have the right balance or reflexes to make quick decisions. It's possible to fall in a split second, and it's better to be safe than sorry.

There are helmets made specifically for horse riding; a simple bike riding one will not suffice. You must also ensure that your helmet fits correctly to ensure optimal safety.

2. Safety Vest

Like a helmet, a safety vest is a great way to keep you safe in the event of a fall. Safety vests protect a rider's chest, vital organs, and the potential impact of hooves. Anyone who rides horses knows that falling is sometimes inevitable. You will eventually experience it, especially as you become more skilled at other things that can affect your balance—such as jumping and cantering. There are many styles to choose from, including ones that are filled with air to provide extra protection.

Safety vests can be bulky but are worth it. A vest that absorbs some shock from hitting the ground is better than getting the wind knocked out or breaking a rib.



What Type of Clothing Should I Wear?

For the casual horseback rider, clothing isn't a super big deal. However, if you want the overall experience to be more comfortable, here are a few clothing suggestions:

1. Shirts

You can find shirts specifically made for horseback riding that has comfort features. However, if that isn't something you're interested in, any shirt that does not restrict your movement and is made from a breathable fabric is a good option. It is also a good idea to consider wearing a shirt with built-in UV protection, as you will spend a lot of time in Utah outdoors.

2. Pants

Breeches are pants designed for horseback riding. These pants are made from a thin, stretchy fabric; they have been specifically created for easy movement and have no inside seams to prevent chafing. They are snugly fitted and feature special gripping fabric that allows for communication and safety with horses.

There are discipline-specific horseback riding pants (like jeans for reining); however, any comfortable riding pants will work for a beginner.

3. Boots

When it comes to riding, Regular boots are not recommended as they aren't super safe. Riding boots have a low heel and a lightly textured sole that prevents your foot from sliding through the stirrup. They also have a firm toe box to protect your toes.

For those just starting out, any ankle boots with a good tread and a 1-inch heel are a great option. The heel stops your foot from sliding through the stirrup.

4. Gloves

Holding rubber or leather reins can cause discomfort initially, especially if they are new and haven't been broken in. Your hands can also sweat, making it difficult to hold the reins securely. These problems can be solved by wearing gloves.

Riding gloves are flexible and conform to your fingers and hands while having sticky material on the palm sides. Therefore, it's important to choose gloves that are comfortable and fit well.

What is The Necessary Horseback Riding Gear?

Once you figure out what you need, the next step is to figure out what your [horse](#) needs. To have a good riding experience, the horse must be as comfortable as possible. Here are

a few essentials to consider:

1. Saddle, Saddle Pad, and Girth

The saddle will be the most expensive investment you make for your horse. Saddles should be adjusted to fit the horse and rider. To ensure your saddle lasts, you'll need to know how to maintain it.

Saddle pads are used underneath the saddle to protect from excessive rubbing. They also protect your saddle by absorbing perspiration and preventing heat buildup.

A Girth is a band that attaches to a saddle and wraps around the horse's stomach to keep the saddle in place.

2. Bridle, Reins, and Bit

A horse bridle is used to communicate with horses. It's designed to take advantage of horses' natural tendency to move away from pressure. The horse will follow the rider's lead as they pull on the reins. The rider can communicate what they want from the horse using strategic pulls. Remember that bits should provide pressure, not pain. To ensure that your horse is comfortable and effective, make sure you measure it properly.

Horses can be trained to respond to the commands of a rider. The horse will respond to a rider by moving his head in the same direction as the pressure applied to the reins. For example, if a rider pulls on the bridle reins, the horse will move in that direction. Consistent pressure on both the left and right reins will signal a horse to slow down or stop depending on how much pressure is applied. This communication works in conjunction with the signals given by the rider and any voice commands.

3. Stirrup Leathers

The shaped metal rings where your feet go when you ride a horse are called stirrup Irons. They attach to the stirrup leather, which attaches under the skirt to the tree of your saddle. Stirrup irons support your feet while riding and provide stable ground for your horse to be mounted.

4. Grooming Tools

A way to keep your horse healthy and happy is by grooming them. Grooming makes the horse's coat shiny and increases circulation. It also gives you an early warning system that will alert you to any potential health problems that may need medical attention.

Final Tips to Have An Amazing Ride

Remember, the most important thing is to be safe and have fun! You don't need to be

one of the most experienced riders to enjoy horses. Like everything in life, it takes time to get used to rides.

Lastly, if you're interested, [guided](#) trail rides do exist in Utah. The experienced riders there would be happy to ease you into rides with a guided trail ride! One of the most popular horseback riding tours is with Rocky Mountain Outfitters, located outside Salt Lake City. Book a guided tour with your family and friends today!

